



Joining the New Caravan: ISIS and the Regeneration of Terrorism in Southeast Asia

June 25, 2015 | Dr. Zachary Abuza

Introduction.

Since early-2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has made gradual inroads into Southeast Asia. There are an estimated 500 Southeast Asians, not including family and kin, in Iraq and Syria fighting for ISIS, as well as al-Nusra, which at first attracted far more Southeast Asians. Since August 2014, there has been a company of Bahasa-speaking Southeast Asians, *Katibah Nusantara*, within ISIS. The numbers have remained low only because of proactive policies from regional security forces, who are determined not to repeat the mistakes of the 1990s when they turned a blind eye to returning veterans of the Afghan mujahideen. As an Indonesian counter-terrorism official put it, “We have experience [of those who committed terrorist acts in Indonesia] after going to Afghanistan and the Philippines and we don’t want ISIS alumni to do the same.”¹ Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore have all detained people for involvement in ISIS or prevented them from traveling abroad. Jihadists from around the region, including the co-founder of the al-Qaeda affiliated Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), Abu Bakar Ba’asyir,² as well as Philippine groups such as the Abu Sayyaf and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, have pledged *bai’at* to the self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS) caliphate. There have been a number of children of JI members to join IS, including the sons of Bali bombers Imam Samudra and Mukhlas, while the sons of senior JI members, Mukhliansyah and Abu Jibril, have joined al-Nusra.

Southeast Asians comprise only a small fraction of the estimated 12,000-16,000 foreigners in ISIS. While their numbers are small, and will remain relatively low, they will have disproportionate influence at home. They include Malaysia’s first suicide bomber and members who have been

featured in ISIS beheading videos. They are creating new hagiographies and will be put upon a pedestal back home as the vanguard of the next generation of Salafi militants. Importantly, their ability to recruit through social media has broadened their base and sped up the process of radicalization and recruitment. While some have ties to the former network of JI, many have no ties; ISIS is reaching entirely new demographics, including women. Recruits represent the entire socioeconomic spectrum; there is no single profile of recruits. While JI's splinters have debated the utility of targeting the "near enemy" or "far enemy," ISIS has focused on violent sectarianism and attacks what it deems "apostate" regimes; many JI splinters have come to the conclusion that targeting the "far enemy" was very counterproductive. ISIS has reinvigorated social welfare organizations and transnational networks across Southeast Asia. While most JI attacks had organizational backing, ISIS has inspired "lone wolf" attacks that perhaps are less lethal but almost impossible to prevent.

In sum, ISIS has rekindled terrorism in Southeast Asia after years of decline. In the years following the October 2002 Bali bombing, over 500 members of JI, including many of its leaders, were arrested across Southeast Asia. Although JI was able to perpetrate major attacks between 2002 and 2005, it was unable to stage major attacks from that time until 2007. Attacks since then have been relatively small scale. JI was riddled with factionalism and was seriously divided over strategy and tactics. There were two chief camps: There were advocates of the al-Qaeda line who established a new organization, al-Qaeda in Indonesia, under the leadership of Noordin Mohammad Top. On the other side were people who argued that targeting the west had little impact on the movement's objectives and led to government crackdowns, and who articulated a strategy based on waging sectarian conflict in Sulawesi, the outer islands, in order to create pure communities governed by *Shariah* from which JI could emanate without provoking heavy-handed government responses.

The problem was, neither strategy worked particularly well. The pro al-Qaeda group did stage suicide bombings in Jakarta in 2009, but that was it. Elite Indonesian counterterrorism forces replaced the clumsy and thuggish Brimob forces in Central Sulawesi, helping to neutralize the advocates of sectarian violence. Other members of JI threw in the towel and established nominally nonviolent organizations such as Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT). In 2009-10, there was an attempt to reunify these divisions: JI leaders who had been hiding in Mindanao returned to Indonesia and established a large training camp in Aceh. This cell, which called itself "al Qaeda on the Veranda of Mecca" (a Koranic reference to Aceh), was influenced by the Lashkar e-Taiba's 2008 takeover of the hotel in Mumbai and wanted to replicate the bold but low cost operation in

Jakarta. This cell was broken up and more than 125 members were found. A senior member of this cell, Umar Patek, was arrested in Abbottabad, Pakistan, shortly before Osama bin Laden was killed by U.S. Navy Seals. Patek was there to solicit al-Qaeda support and funding. After 2010, JI was severely crippled and could only stage small-scale attacks. JAT was also hurt in the follow-up as its leader, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, was imprisoned for 15 years for his role in funding the camp. Other splinters emerged, but they were that, simply splinters. Yet, the emergence and success of ISIS has reinvigorated JI's successor organizations.

The Numbers.

Southeast Asians comprise a fraction of the Soufan's Group's estimated 12,000 foreign fighters, or the U.S. State Department's estimated 16,000 fighters who have joined ISIS since 2012.³ More recent estimates put the number at 20,000.⁴ There are over 500 Southeast Asians in Iraq or Syria, including family members of militants. Were it not for very proactive policing, the numbers would be far higher. Many Southeast Asians have fought with al-Nusra, which brought in Southeast Asians through the JI network early on because of its al-Qaeda affiliation. But the rate of recruitment into ISIS has grown faster, perhaps because of the group's battlefield success in 2014.⁵

Indonesian counterterrorism officials believe that there have only been 159 Indonesians who have served as ISIS combatants, up from their mid-2014 estimate of 56.⁶ There are estimates of over 514 Indonesians. Though some suggest that figure includes family members, Indonesian counterterrorism officials suggest otherwise. Of the 159, 11 are confirmed dead, though there are estimates of higher casualty rates, while 11 have returned to Indonesia.⁷ Yet, the number of Indonesians alone going to fight in Syria and Iraq has already surpassed the number that went to Afghanistan between 1985 and 1994.

Malaysian officials have confirmed the involvement of only 67. Although that does not include family members, it, too, is up from their mid-2014 estimate of 30.⁸ As of March 2015, Malaysia had arrested or detained over 120 people for involvement in ISIS.⁹ Counterterrorism officials have confirmed 11 Malaysians have been killed, including six suicide bombers.¹⁰

Nine Singaporean nationals are also believed to have joined ISIS.¹¹ In addition, Singapore has detained one individual under the Internal Security Act, while two more were under "Restriction Orders." At least one Cambodian Cham, according to one British jihadist who appeared in a video, "There's No Life Without Jihad," is also there.¹²

While there are no confirmed reports of anyone from the southern Philippines traveling to join ISIS, two fringe militant organizations, the Abu Sayyaf and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, have pledged *bai'at* to the self-proclaimed IS caliphate.¹³ I view this largely as publicity stunts. For example, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) linked their threatened beheading of two German hostages to changes in international policy towards ISIS. Despite one of the hostages being photographed sitting in his own grave in front of an ISIS flag, those demands were dropped with the payment of \$1.35 million in ransom but with no concession by the Germans on ending their participation in the campaign in Syria.¹⁴ But one can never discount the possibility that some of their members will join. A Singaporean JI member, known as Muawiyah, and a handful of Malaysians that have been active in recruiting for ISIS are believed to be with the Abu Sayyaf today. Should the Philippine peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front completely unravel, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Front will be the main beneficiary. Their ties—however tenuous—to ISIS may herald a more sectarian strategy.

What we do know is that there are enough Bahasa speaking Southeast Asians to establish a company within ISIS, *Katibah Nusantara*, that has been at the forefront of the fighting against Kurdish Peshmurga. *Katibah Nusantara* came together in August 2014, when a core of at least 22 Indonesians and Malaysians in the town of Al-Shadadi, Hasaka province, Syria, pledged allegiance to ISIS.¹⁵ *Katibah Nusantara* has recently renamed itself *Majmu'ah al-Arkhabiliy*.¹⁶ Moreover, a critical mass of their families have joined them so as to establish a Bahasa language school, the Abdullah Azzam Academy, where children are indoctrinated in ISIS ideology and given military training.¹⁷ This is not new for ISIS, which recently released images of its Camp Farouk military training facility in Raqqa where children (“cubs of the caliphate”) are being prepared to be the next generation of fighters, practicing beheadings and fighting.¹⁸

Right now it is the logistical backlog and trouble of getting out of Malaysia and Indonesia that is keeping the numbers at current levels. Indonesian officials state that there is a backlog. Indonesian recruiters actually do a fair bit of vetting because the logjam is so great. Malaysian authorities are confident that they have effectively blocked the use of the country as a transit point for Southeast Asian jihadis traveling to join ISIS. A recruiter in Syria for the militant group just posted a warning on the ISIS website urging Indonesians not to transit in Malaysia, saying that to do so would be “suicidal.”¹⁹ Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Noor Rashid Ibrahim said, “We are glad our efforts are showing results and are preventing militants from joining IS through Malaysia. We will continue our vigilance at all exit and entry points to ensure no one slips through our net.”²⁰ In December 2014, they returned 12 Indonesians, including nine women and children, who

were en route to Turkey.²¹ The governments of Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia have all prevented people from traveling to Iraq and Syria. Most recently, Turkish authorities arrested 16 Indonesians trying to cross into Syria and are searching for an additional group of 16, prompting calls for greater intelligence sharing between the two countries.

There is clearly intense pressure being brought on ISIS supporters at home. In August 2014, the head of the ISIS support group in Indonesia publicly quit ISIS under very obvious police pressure.²²

Who Are They?

The recruits to JI were a fairly narrow profile: young male students from a network of *madrassahs*, centering on Al Mukmin in Yogyakarta, with affiliated institutions in West Java, East Kalimantan, and Johor state in Malaysia. JI also included a large number of technically educated elites, including faculty and students from schools such as Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. The profile of ISIS supporters and recruits is much larger and represents a cross section of society: from 14-year old girls who were prevented from traveling overseas to former JI combatants. However, it includes people from beyond the JI social milieu. Indeed, of all the Malaysians who have joined ISIS, only six had previously been detained for being involved in JI according to the Minister of Home Affairs.²³

In Malaysia and Singapore, most participants have been young, urban, and concentrated within networks in the state of Selangor, notably Shah Alam. The group is a mix of professionals, doctors, lawyers, university lecturers, and factory workers, as well as unemployed youth, mostly recruited through social media, especially Facebook. Malaysian authorities reveal that 10 of the detainees were currently civil servants.²⁴ Security personnel have also been recruited: In June 2014, Malaysian police investigated a navy person for links to ISIS, while former Indonesian army personnel have appeared in ISIS videos. In March 2015, Indonesian counterterrorism officials announced that a policeman had gone “absent without leave” and likely joined ISIS.²⁵ Most other Indonesian recruits are small shop or stall owners or *madrassah* students, people on the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum.

What I find most interesting is the number of women involved. In the case of JI, women played roles in the social networks, and the core of JI was around 150 intermarried families. But beyond that and socializing their children, women played very passive roles. Because ISIS is truly a social

media phenomenon, women are at the forefront of ISIS recruitment, proselytization, and indoctrination. While we do have cases of 14-year-old girls trying to join ISIS, media and reports have vividly described Malaysian women who have joined as brides and taken out loans to fund their travel. The role of women is much more important in terms of building the group's institutional base. In each cell that gets broken up in Malaysia, the core recruiters are women. In May 2014, Malaysia's first major group of arrests of ISIS supporters included Azizah Md Yusof, a 55-year-old housewife who was using two Facebook pages to recruit and "support terrorist activities."²⁶ One of the most well-read blogs was that of an ISIS member who claimed to be a 26-year-old female doctor from Malaysia that traveled to Syria to volunteer her medical training and married an ISIS combatant.²⁷ In October 2014, another 14-person cell was detained that included a recent returnee from Syria and two women described as "top recruiters."²⁸ Another housewife (aged 29) was arrested in March 2015 for her online recruiting activities.²⁹ Women have never been as empowered to take a proactive place within a jihadist movement.

Why Are They Going?

Southeast Asia should be infertile ground for ISIS. First, Southeast Asian Muslims are mostly moderate and tolerant, though clearly less secular than in the past. Second, terrorism has been largely discredited in the region, as most of the victims of JI's reign of terror in Indonesia were fellow Muslims. Third, Southeast Asia is outside of ISIS' own map of the caliphate, though that, too, has expanded with their acceptance of groups such as Boko Haram.³⁰ Yet, they are taking great risks to go. Why?

This is not the first time Southeast Asians have traveled abroad to gain experience and credibility. Between 120 and 150 Malaysians, Indonesians, southern Philippine Muslims, and Southern Thai Pattani went to Pakistan and Afghanistan to join the mujahideen in the 1990s. Many of these individuals returned to Southeast Asia, where they established *madrassahs* and indoctrinated a generation of Salafi jihadists and went on to lead militant organizations around the region, including *Jemaah Islamiyah*, the long-defunct *Laskar Jihad*, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the ASG, and *Gerakan Mujideen Islamliya Pattani* (GMIP). The influence of the Afghan veterans cannot be overstated. They returned from Afghanistan and were put on pedestals in their communities. Their hagiographies were embellished as they constructed a narrative that, if motivated jihadists could topple a super power, then regional secular and authoritarian regimes

could also be defeated. Unchecked, they formed the leadership of the most important militant organizations in the region and established a network of *madrassahs* that served as ideological incubators.

JI has been largely decimated; its last major attack against a western target occurred in 2009. What is left has splintered into many small factions and organizations, including *Jamaah Ansharusy Syariah* (JAS), *Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid* (JAT), *Komite Aksi Penanggulangan Akibat Krisis* (“Crisis Management/Prevention Committee [KOMPAK]”), *Qoidah Aminah*, and *Mujahideen Indonesia Timor* (MIT). MIT is by far the most lethal and organized, but it is geographically contained in Sulawesi and other pockets in Eastern Indonesia.

I do not have a single answer as to why the organizations have not regrouped. There are some ideological differences (i.e., JAS split from JAT over ISIS³¹). There are differences over targeting (i.e., the near enemy vs. the far enemy). Most groups contend that targeting the West has been highly counterproductive and advocate a return to sectarian attacks and targeting Indonesian security forces. This has been particularly true with MIT. In some ways, it is just hard to reconstitute in the face of an intense security dragnet. Finally, there is ego involved; all see themselves as the spiritual heirs of JI and want to assume the mantle of leadership.

This is an opportunity to gain military experience, to develop their bonafides and haioographies as global jihadists. Their presence alone in Syria and Iraq gives them jihadi credibility. This is the first step to rebuilding their campaign in Southeast Asia. Governments have been proactive at trying to counter them, more than in the 1990s, but there is still a degree of tolerance for activities abroad, far less so than if they were engaged in militancy at home.

It is also an opportunity to develop sources of funds to rebuild their network. “ISIS is the wealthiest jihadi organization on the planet now, and Indonesian jihadis are looking for funding and experience,” said Taufik Andrie, a leading scholar of JI.³² Indonesian National Counterterrorism Agency officials speak of the infrastructure that has been put in place to facilitate the movement of recruits, which includes recruitment, preparing their travel documents, providing allowances of \$1,500 for accommodations and transportation via Malaysia, and the offer of housing and education for their children.³³ On August 8, 2014, Indonesian counterterrorism police arrested a key financier from the JAT who was funding ISIS recruitment.³⁴ On March 20, 2015, Indonesian counterterrorism police arrested a six-person cell, including a man thought to be a top recruiter for ISIS, who had funded the trips of at least 16 individuals.³⁵ Yet the infrastructure is

multilayered enough to withstand these few arrests. Several Indonesians who returned from Syria complaining that the benefits promised by ISIS never materialized. These benefits included salaries, housing, and the payment of debts.³⁶ Yet, Malaysian and Indonesian counterterrorism (CT) officials spoke of the established pipeline that got them into training camps in Syria.

The brutality of ISIS makes us often overlook the fact that it is “very Islamic.” Graeme Woods argues very persuasively that “the religion preached by its most ardent followers derives from coherent and even learned interpretations of Islam.”³⁷

Virtually every major decision and law promulgated by the Islamic State adheres to what it calls, in its press and pronouncements, and on its billboards, license plates, stationery, and coins, ‘the Prophetic Methodology,’ which means following the prophecy and example of Muhammad, in punctilious detail.

As the leading authority on ISIS ideology, Bernard Haykel put it, “There is an assiduous, obsessive seriousness” about the group’s dedication to Koranic text.³⁸ This is very attractive to Southeast Asians who feel that they are confined to the Islamic periphery and often viewed condescendingly by their coreligionists in the Middle East and South Asia.

But to be fair, there is an indication that the militants from Southeast Asia have no plans to return soon. Many are bringing their entire families and appear to be setting down roots and educating their children. This may be a very long-term strategy that is hinged on the success of ISIS in establishing an Islamic state.

Why Their Presence Matters.

Southeast Asians offer little to ISIS other than propaganda value. They are such a small percentage of the foreign fighters that they have little in the way of battlefield efficacy. But ISIS does offer many things, beyond their potential to help regenerate terrorist cells and organizations across Southeast Asia that will impact regional security.

It is the spread of a horrifically virulent ideology. But its spread via social media is ubiquitous in Southeast Asia. Internet penetration in the region is very high, 67 percent in Malaysia. Although it is only 16 percent in Indonesia, it is far higher in the regions from which ISIS is recruiting.³⁹ Indonesia has some of the highest rates of Twitter and Facebook use in the world, while Malaysia’s

are not that far behind. Although the governments have been trying to block social media and websites, the work-arounds are too easy, and there are too many mirror sites. Attempts to block ISIS propaganda is doomed to failure.⁴⁰

Because so much of the recruitment is done online, the rate of recruitment has never been higher.⁴¹ For example, recruitment into JI was a gradual process based on personal ties (kinship, friendship, *madrassah*, and mosque). Recruitment into ISIS is quick and does not require personal connections. The barriers to entry are lower. As one Malaysian counterterrorism official put it, “With JI, it took 1 year to be recruited. This group, in 1 or 2 days, they will take an oath.”⁴² Malaysian officials have been alarmed at their success using social media: “They are using an organised, steady infusion of propaganda videos and call-to-action messages circulated via social media platforms, such as blogs, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.”⁴³

These platforms now include Malaysia’s first six suicide bombers.⁴⁴ In October 2014, an Indonesian martyred himself at an airbase in Iraq. He was the third Indonesian *shaheed*.⁴⁵ Every time this happens, the psychological threshold diminishes.

There is a well-founded fear that the spectacle of violence demonstrated by ISIS will take root. Two Malaysians were identified as taking part in a grisly ISIS beheading video.⁴⁶ It is not that this has not been done in the past. The ASG has beheaded over 20 people, southern Thai insurgents have beheaded almost 40, JI and MIT have both beheaded victims in the past; but it is still regarded as beyond the pale among Southeast Asians. Southeast Asian jihadists have never video-taped the act of decapitation or glorified it. As ISIS videos are viewed and celebrated, the threshold lowers, and their base of support no longer finds it to be anathema to Southeast Asian culture. Moreover, such extreme violence will force security services to react and—most likely—overreact, which is what the militants try to provoke.

Media platforms are frequently used in ISIS propaganda, in part to recruit other Southeast Asians, but also to demonstrate ISIS’ global appeal and reach. The propaganda is very well made, well edited, and has far higher production value than the ham-fisted response of governments. It is broadcast across multiple media platforms, especially with the proliferation of 4G smart phones. ISIS has proved extremely adept at exploiting social media, controlling their message, recruiting, and indoctrinating.

- Indeed, one of ISIS’ biggest online boosters has been the 29-year-old Australian convert to

Islam, Musa Cerantonio, who was based in the Philippines until his arrest on July 11 and his extradition to Australia.⁴⁷ According to British researchers, he was one of the most influential boosters of ISIS in the world, with a massive following in social media.⁴⁸

- Malaysia first posted videos for recruitment showing members already in Syria, including Ustadz Mohd Lotfi Ariffin, one of the most renowned Malaysian jihadists and a former JI member.⁴⁹ Lotfi was constantly engaging his followers on social media and, at the time of his death, had over 20,000 followers on Facebook. This video was of very low production quality, but video quality would quickly improve.
- In June 2014, two videos featuring Indonesians appeared online. In a mixture of Bahasa and Arabic, the four men represented a cross-selection of society. A former soldier, university student, businessman, and a youth implored their compatriots: “Let us fight in the path of Allah because it is our duty to do jihad in the path of Allah . . . especially here in Sham [the Syrian region] . . . and because, God willing, it will be to this country that our families will do the holy migration.” Another said, “Brothers in Indonesia, don’t be afraid because fear is the temptation of Satan.” A third—the former Indonesian soldier—attacked Indonesia’s official secular ideology of *Pancasila*.⁵⁰
- In July 2014, the ISIS propaganda wing al-Hayat Media Centre released a recruitment video entitled “Join the Ranks” that featured Abu Muhammad al-Indonesi.⁵¹ The 8:27-minute video features an impassioned sermon/appeal by BahrumSyah, flanked by seven followers, in which he goads and cajoles fellow Southeast Asians to join ISIS, rejecting excuses they have and emphasizing their Koranic obligation. He offers the hope of the ISIS and then presents it as a case of “defensive jihad,” fighting enemies of Islam that are trying to roll back the caliphate.
- In another example, a group of Southeast Asians were featured on the last page of the October edition of ISIS’ glossy magazine, *Dabiq*.
- In a December 24, 2014, video entitled “*Ancaman wahabi terhadap Polisi, TNI dan Densus 88, Banser*” (Wahabi threat against the Police, TNI and Densus, Banser),⁵² an Indonesian national, Salim Mubarak Attamimi (Abu Jandal), warns the country’s security forces that the Islamic State would “slaughter” them “one by one” as part of its attempt to implement *Shariah*.

We’ve heard that you want to help the coalition forces, to eliminate the Caliphate. But know that we are truly happy to hear this. Because this means that, God willing, the meeting between you and us will be expedited by God. . . . And if you don’t come to us, we will come to you. We will come back to

Indonesia . . . to implement the *Shariah* of God. The implementation of the *Shariah* of God starts with waging a war on you—with slaughtering you one by one—the [Indonesian] military, the National Police, Densus [88] and Banser.⁵³

- In March 2015, a video entitled “*Cahaya Tarbiyah di Bumi Khilafah*” (“The Light of Education on the Caliphate’s Earth”) shows Southeast Asian children, all under the age of 15, being indoctrinated, praying, eating, and receiving training with assault rifles. The video, which is a little over 2-minutes long, was produced by Alazzam Media, which claims to be the Malay language media division of the Islamic caliphate. If this is true, this suggests investments are being made to further propagandize and recruit in Southeast Asia.
- Local websites and social media platforms quickly translate and distribute ISIS propaganda and materials. The Indonesian pro-jihadi website *www.al-mustaqbal.net* is a one-stop shop for all things ISIS.

Radical anti-Shia-ism and sectarianism of ISIS bodes ill for Southeast Asia. In many ways, the Shia are more reviled by Salafis than non-Muslims. Though there are few Shia in Southeast Asia, antipathy towards them is high, but the region’s recent history of sectarian conflict makes it fertile ground for ISIS’ virulent practice of *takfir*.⁵⁴ ISIS’ brutal attacks against the Shia are inspiring similar attacks in Indonesia, where there is a similar desire to “cleanse” their religion. The Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace has reported a three-fold increase in the number of attacks on Shia between 2012 and 2013. This is coupled with a surge in attacks against the Ahmadiyah sect in recent years, including a brutal attack in February 2011 in which three Ahmadis were beaten to death while Indonesian police stood by.⁵⁵ In June 2008, the government banned the Ahmadiyah, despite the constitutional protection of freedom of religion.⁵⁶ According to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, between 2008-13, some 62 Ahmadiyah mosques were attacked or destroyed, 45 of which were forcibly closed, and more than 100 people were displaced after their village in Lombok was attacked.⁵⁷ There have been further attacks on Suffis. The government’s 2008 *Decree on Deviant Sects* has been seen as a green light for groups like the Friends Provident International to engage in sectarian violence.⁵⁸ In Malaysia, the government’s narrow view of faith has encouraged *takfiri*, or accusing other Muslims of apostasy. The Shia in Malaysia have been especially targeted for their beliefs, often openly by the government’s religious authorities. The government has broadly encouraged religious extremist views by funding organizations that promote intolerance and exclusion, and it has sent mixed signals in its interventions over religious hatred.⁵⁹

In the next 2 years, more than 200 JI members will be freed from prisons in Indonesia, which have become the key breeding grounds for ISIS.⁶⁰ Abu Bakar Ba'asyir has actively been calling on inmates to pledge allegiance to the movement.⁶¹ Aman Abdurrahman, an influential Islamist cleric, is Indonesia's main translator for ISIS and has been able to disseminate information online from inside a maximum-security prison, including the group's recent call on Muslims to kill Westerners indiscriminately.⁶² Indonesian prison officials have warned of a budgetary shortfall for counter-radicalization, and their program was always woefully underfunded compared to those of Malaysia and Singapore.⁶³ In Malaysia, too, most of the people that have been detained will be freed without charge.

But it is not just Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. The most violent and active of all the JI splinters that has given Indonesian counterterrorism forces the greatest cause for alarm, the MIT, pledged *bai'at* to al-Baghdadi in an audio recording uploaded to YouTube in June 2014. These videos have shown training conducted in front of ISIS flags.⁶⁴ ISIS, meanwhile, has found support among other Indonesian radical groups such as the Forum of Activists for Islamic Syariah (Faksi) and Islam Reform Movement (Garis).⁶⁵ It has likewise found support from other fringe groups in Malaysia and Indonesia, including 19 groups in Indonesia and five in Malaysia, meaning it is not solely relying on the old JI/Darul Islam network on which the al-Qaeda affiliate had been built.⁶⁶ ISIS has been able to broaden its base of support.

Malaysian foreign ministry officials, in particular, are concerned about ISIS-encouraged lone wolf terrorism. "A person armed merely with a knife who starts stabbing people in a mall is enough to disrupt safety and security," said a senior Special Branch Counter Terrorism official. "Anyone who is pro-IS can carry out the attack at any moment. That is our biggest fear."⁶⁷ ISIS has inspired lone wolf attacks in Europe and Australia, which are almost impossible to prevent. Indeed, Malaysia, which was spared all the terrorist attacks during JI's decade-long reign of terror, had its closest brush from ISIS-loyal terrorists in mid-2014. In August 2014, a 19-man cell purchased bomb-making material, including aluminum powder, to bomb a Carlsberg brewery. Though they were still at the "discussion" stage," as one counterterrorism (CT) official put it, "In terms of ideology and intention it was very clear. It would have been carried out."⁶⁸

On April 26, Malaysian police arrested 12 members of ISIS and seized a cache of explosives, 20 kilograms of ammonium nitrate, a similar amount of potassium nitrate, remote control devices, and other bomb-making materials being readied to attack the Association of Southeast Asian

Nations (ASEAN) summit, held in Kuala Lumpur from April 26-28, 2015. Never has Malaysia been closer to a major terrorist attack.⁶⁹

But attacks will be problematic in Indonesia, as well. In February 2015, a small improvised explosive device (IED) that failed to detonate properly in a Jakarta mall raised the specter of increased lethality, as the bomb was comprised of chlorine.⁷⁰ Though often used by ISIS,⁷¹ this is the first time that chlorine was used in an IED in Southeast Asia.

ISIS has reactivated several charities linked to militant groups in Southeast Asia. JI never fully adopted the “inverse triangle” model of Hamas or Hezbollah, in which most of a group’s activities are overt, such as charitable work and the provision of social services, while only a small component of the organization remains a clandestine and violent terrorist cell.⁷² This violence has always been a weakness of JI as it diminishes their societal resiliency since those overt activities make them long-lived, unrootable, and able to fully penetrate a society. But several JI-linked charities have made ISIS central to their recent operations. These include the Hilal Ahmar Society, which has supported the recruitment and travel of JI members to travel to Syria for military training since 2013.⁷³

There is also a concern about the development of transnational networks, especially within Southeast Asia. The lesson of the 1990s Afghan mujahideen was that returnees operated across international boundaries, exploiting loopholes and taking advantage of different security environments so that no one security service had a clear picture of their operations. This is all the more true today and potentially on a much larger scale. For example, in July 2014, Malaysian officials announced that five suspects with ties to ISIS and the Abu Sayyaf were hiding in Mindanao. This cell was responsible for dispatching the first five Malaysians, including the first suicide bomber, to Syria in March 2014.⁷⁴ The transnational networks are more than just the traditional intra-Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); they now include China. In September 2014, Indonesian authorities arrested seven people, including four Uighurs in Poso, who had been liaising with MIT.⁷⁵

The insurgency in southern Thailand is now in its 12th year. Although the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) is in it for *merdeka* (independence) and eschews the caliphate of ISIS, we cannot rule out the presence of people from southern Thailand fighting with ISIS; they are indistinguishable from Malaysians. Second, they will not turn away ISIS supporters that have crossed over from Malaysia. The BRN and those in its social network might not share ISIS ideology

100 percent, but they both have mistrust of the Malaysian government. There is a legitimate concern that ISIS is becoming an attractive model as the BRN appears to be winning, or certainly has enjoyed rapid gains in 2014, while ISIS has plateaued. For now, the threat is of transit and sanctuary. In the BRN-dominated villages, dreams are of *merdeka*, but sadly, ISIS propaganda and Malaysian discussion forums are starting to be discussed in social media among urban youth and more radicalized university students.

Government Countermeasures.

Indonesian and Malaysian officials have been very proactive about the threat of ISIS and have gone to great lengths to stop people from traveling to Iraq and Syria to join them. Were it not for those efforts, the number of Southeast Asians in ISIS ranks would swell. Intelligence and police cooperation with international partners is more important than ever, and states have really overcome their mistrust and reluctance to share intelligence. They are reaching out and forging new partnerships, such as with Turkey.

But ISIS' slick propaganda and their effective use of social media, compared with the moribund response from the governments, means that ISIS will continue to attract recruits, and not just from traditional jihadist networks in Southeast Asia; they are reaching new demographics. Their virulent and violent ideology is appealing to some in the region. This will serve to rebuild terrorist networks that have been decimated after years of successful police and intelligence operations; ISIS will be the new vanguard. They have refocused efforts against the “near enemy” and worked to glorify gratuitous violence in the region.

Police work and intelligence gathering will not be enough. Indonesia and Malaysia have both found that charging people for merely supporting ISIS has been a dismal failure.⁷⁶ Simply trying to block certain social media sites or YouTube videos is an act of futility. Indeed, on April 1, 2015, Indonesia's Ministry of Communications and Information reversed course and stopped blocking 22 extremist websites due to freedom of speech concerns.⁷⁷ And even if they hadn't, the information would have migrated to other sites one step ahead of law enforcement.

Both Malaysia and Indonesia have drafted a host of new counterterrorism legislation. These will not achieve their desired goals, other than expanding their powers. The Malaysian government tabled two new counterterrorism bills: the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) and the Special Measures Against Terrorism in Foreign Countries Bill (Foreign Fighters Bill). The latter would

allow authorities to suspend or revoke passports of both Malaysians and foreigners if they are suspected of engaging in or supporting terrorism while abroad. POTA would allow Malaysian authorities to hold a suspected terrorist for 2 years without trial, harkening back to the draconian 1960 Internal Security Act, scrapped in 2012.⁷⁸ One provision of the bill effectively gives investigating officers unchecked powers, even possible torture, to gain evidence.⁷⁹ The bill does not allow for any judicial review by any court. Indonesian authorities are similarly debating a new counterterrorism law to replace their existing 2003 legislation that was passed in the immediate aftermath of the October 2002 Bali bombing.⁸⁰ Indonesian National Police Inspector-General Tito Karnavian said, “Our legislation today is not sufficient to cover and to prevent and to investigate those supporting ISIS.”⁸¹

Indonesian President Joko Widodo is also considering issuing an interim emergency government regulation (a *perppu*) to deter Indonesians from joining IS. Although a final decision has not been made, it could include a provision to revoke citizenship for people who travel to join IS. The *perppu* includes bans on verbal support for IS, traveling overseas to support terrorist groups, engaging in terrorist activity abroad, and propagating terrorist ideology, loosely defined.⁸²

Real concerns exist about the abuse of these laws. They offer little in the way of oversights and protections. They also can be misused for political ends. Malaysia’s disturbing spate of arrests under the controversial Sedition Act illustrates the costs of laws that are used to silence opponents rather than genuinely protect national security. Taken with the incredible politicization of its Special Branch, there are serious concerns for the abuse of such powers.⁸³ Neither Malaysia nor Indonesia has provided adequate justifications of why these measures are necessary or addressed the potential human rights problems that may arise from the abuse of these laws. Neither country has adequately justified why existing laws, such as Indonesia’s 2003 legislation or Malaysia’s Security Offences (Special Measures) Act of 2012, are inadequate.⁸⁴

But to no surprise, the governments continue to play up the threats. As the Malaysian Bar Association joined opposition and governing coalition opposition to the new POTA bill, Malaysian authorities announced the arrest of 17, including two recent returnees from Syria. The government stated that those arrested were actively plotting terrorist acts in Kuala Lumpur but offered no evidence.⁸⁵ States are going to inoculate themselves of this virus through mere increases in funding for security forces or new counterterrorism legislation or stripping people of citizenship.

Combating ISIS requires social resiliency. And, importantly, it means that governments are going to have to stop creating the conditions where ISIS will be able to plant roots. A more productive holistic approach is necessary. A key starting point is to undercut the recruitment efforts at their source. As ISIS is a social media phenomenon, it has to be confronted in this way. Its recruitment videos and marketing are slick, offering far higher production value across every conceivable media platform than any ham-fisted government counternarrative. Simply blocking websites or demanding YouTube take down videos is doomed to failure; there are too many easy technical work-arounds. Reducing appeal involves taking on the narrative head-on, using the very same mediums.

In March 2015, Indonesia arrested a disillusioned returnee from ISIS. The 31-year-old JAT member was promised a high salary, his debts paid off, and jihadist glory. He was poorly paid, saddled with debts to cover his travel to Syria (RP20 million), and rarely engaged in combat.⁸⁶ After 6 months, he returned home, fully disillusioned. Rather than arrest him, Indonesia should actively promote him in discussion forums and social media, as well as allow him to lecture at mosques and prisons.

The governments also need to confront growing religious intolerance within their own societies and the policies that create the context for ISIS to be so appealing. The region's growing religious intolerance makes it fertile ground for the virulent ISIS practice of *takfir*. The radical anti-Shia-ism and sectarianism of IS resonates across Southeast Asia. Brutal attacks against the Shia are inspiring attacks where there is a similar desire to "cleanse" their religion. The governments' declaration of sects as "deviant," as in Indonesia's 2008 decree, has provided carte blanche to fuel hatred. The Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace has reported a three-fold increase in the number of attacks on Shia between 2012 and 2013 in the region. Malaysia's record is not much better, with the country ranked as "highly restrictive" on religious freedom by the Pew Center, and institutionalized bans on Shia are well established.

There has been little done to change mindsets of intolerance. A new survey of high school students in Jakarta found low levels of support for ISIS (7 percent), though awareness of the group was growing. More disturbing was increased intolerance of sects like Shia and the Amadiyah; 43.8 percent said that they should be banned. Ironically, the religious institutions used to "treat" members of these deviant sects are the same ones charged with disengaging militants.⁸⁷ Part of this problem lies with the embedded intolerance within religious authorities, who are promoting

division rather than dignity. Even Malaysia's Special Branch has acknowledged that religious authorities are sympathetic to ISIS, highlighting that the problem lies less with the laws than with changing the attitudes of those implementing them.

The support of mainstream Muslim organizations in Indonesia such as the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, who have rejected ISIS and the establishment of the caliphate by force, is critical. But we need to expose the growing intolerance of some other organizations such as the Indonesian Ulama's Council (MUI), which has issued appallingly shrill *fatwahs* on secularism. Most recently, it stated that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) activities would be punished by stoning, while the Islamist political party in Malaysia, PAS, is pushing through its *hudud* bill that includes stonings and beheadings.

Targeted action is required. The governments should devote more resources for disengagement programs in prison, which are some of ISIS' most fertile recruiting grounds. Indonesia's program has long been underfunded, but it is at a critical juncture today, especially as some 200 members of JI are due to be released in the coming few years. Malaysia's prisons do not meet international standards and similarly serve as breeding grounds of anger. Governments will have to invest more in disengagement programs, especially in prisons.

The threat of ISIS is real. Governments already have significant powers and tools at their disposal for effective law enforcement. Simply giving security forces more powers that can be abused while ignoring the context of ISIS' recruitment and sources of appeal will do little to stem the movement. In fact, the new laws will create a false sense of security.

ENDNOTES

1. "Indonesia Prepares for Backlash from Returning Jihadis," *Financial Times*, 2014, available from www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/o/e2dc2b12-22c3-11e4-9dc4-00144feabdco.html#axzz3AGuuDIqi.
2. Jet Damazo-Santos, "Support ISIS, Jailed Indonesian Terror Leader Tells Followers," *Rappler.com*, July 14, 2014, available from www.rappler.com/world/regions/asia-pacific/indonesia/63281-support-isis-jailed-indonesian-terror-leader.

3. Richard Barrett, "Foreign Fighters in Syria," The Soufan Group, June 2014, available from soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/TSG-Foreign-Fighters-in-Syria.pdf. Their June 2014 report cites official government estimates from Indonesia as 30-60, one from Singapore, and no official estimates from Malaysia and the Philippines.

4. "More than 20,000 foreign Fighters Have Joined ISIS," *The Washington Post*, available from knowmore.washingtonpost.com/2015/01/27/more-than-20000-foreign-fighters-have-joined-isis/.

5. There is a likelihood that al-Nusra will continue to attract Southeast Asians as ISIS is targeted and overextended. Bassem Mroue, "Nusra Front Quietly Rises in Syria as Islamic State Targeted," *The Jakarta Post*, March 24, 2015, available from m.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/03/24/nusra-front-quietly-rises-syria-islamic-state-targeted.html.

6. Stuart Grudgings and Aubrey Belford, "Southeast Asia Fears Militant Fallout as Mideast Conflict Widens," *Reuters*, June 2014, available from www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/25/us-iraq-security-southeastasia-idUSKBN0Fo2V620140625.

7. Sara Schonhardt, "Indonesian Official Calls for More Authority to Combat Lure of ISIS," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 26, 2015, available from blogs.wsj.com/indonesiarealtime/2015/03/26/indonesian-official-calls-for-more-authority-to-combat-lure-of-isis/.

8. Not all are with ISIS. An estimated 22 are fighting with Ajnad al-Sham Islamic Union; others are with al-Nusra. "Malaysia Arrests 17 Over Terror Plot," *news.com.au*, April 6, 2015, available from www.news.com.au/world/breaking-news/malaysia-detains-17-terror-suspects/story-e6frfkui-1227293202488; Akil Yunus, "Freelance Jihadist Fights for His Cause," *The Star*, Vol. 77, July 2014, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/07/07/Freelance-jihadist-fights-for-his-cause-I-am-on-my-own-and-not-linked-to-any-terror-cells-says-Malay/.

9. "Two Malaysians in ISIS Beheading Video Identified, Says Report," *The Malaysian Insider*, March 4, 2015, available from www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/two-malaysians-in-isis-beheading-video-identified-says-report#sthash.iikTxcQQ.dpuf; "Malaysia Arrests 17 Over Terror Plot."

10. In May 2014, the Syrian representative to the UN disclosed that 15 Malaysians had been killed in fighting. He offered little in the way of evidence, and I assume he was including Indonesians. Adie Suri Zulkefli, "Police Trying to Establish if any Militants Killed in Syria Were Malaysians," *New Straits Times*, June 25, 2014; "11 Malaysian Members of Isis Dead," *The Malaysian Insider*, May 11, 2015, available from www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/11-malaysian-members-of-isis-dead.
11. Imelda Saad, "'Handful' of Singaporeans Went to Syria to Join Conflict: DPM Teo," *Today Online*, July 9, 2014, available from www.todayonline.com/singapore/handful-singaporeans-went-syria-join-conflict-dpm-teo.
12. Alice Cuddy, "Cambodian Jihadists among Us: ISIS Video," *The Phnom Penh Post*, June 23, 2014, available from www.phnompenhpost.com/national/cambodian-jihadists-among-us-isis-video.
13. Maria Ressa, "Senior Abu Sayyaf Leader Swears Oath to ISIS," *Rappler.com*, August 4, 2014, available from www.rappler.com/nation/65199-abu-sayyaf-leader-oath-isis.
14. "Abu Sayyaf Open to Negotiate with DFA over German Captives' Release," *The Philippine Star*, October 15, 2014, available from www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/10/15/1380541/abu-sayyaf-open-negotiate-dfa-over-german-captives-release; Carmela Fonbuena, "2 Days before 'Deadline,' Abu Sayyaf Steps Up Pressure on German Hostages," *Rappler.com*, October 15, 2015, available from www.rappler.com/nation/72028-abu-sayyaf-german-hostage-media; "Philippine Islamist Militants Free German Hostages-Militant Spokesman," *Reuters*, October 17, 2014, available from nwww.trust.org/item/20141017133312-mfqfl/?source=shtw.
15. "Indonesians Posing as Malaysians for Security Measure, Says Study," *The Star*, January 13, 2015, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/01/13/Indonesians-posing-as-Msians-for-security-measure-says-study/.
16. "New IS Militant Wing for Malaysians, Indonesians Uncovered," *The Star*, March 4, 2015, available from www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/new-is-militant-wing-for-malaysians-indonesians-uncovered.

17. Michael Bachelard, "Children with Assault Rifles Attend Islamic State School," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 19, 2015, available from www.smh.com.au/world/children-with-assault-rifles-attend-islamic-state-school-20150319-1m30eb.html; Ezra Sihite, "Authorities Scramble to Take Down Indonesian Language IS Video," *The Jakarta Globe*, March 17, 2015, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/authorities-scramble-take-indonesian-language-video.

18. Mia Bloom, "Why ISIS Is Increasingly Using Kids As 'Cubs of the Caliphate'," *The Huffington Post*, March 23, 2015, available from www.huffingtonpost.com/mia-bloom/isis-kids-cubs-caliphate_b_6903638.html.

19. Farik Zolkepli, "Malaysia Cuts Off Route Used by Militants to Join IS in Syria," *The Star*, January 13, 2015, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/01/13/No-longer-a-viable-transit-Malaysia-cuts-off-route-used-by-militants-to-join-IS-in-Syria/.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Farouk Arnaz, "Fate of Three Alleged Islamic State Supporters to Be Decided Today," *The Jakarta Globe*, December 22, 2014, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/fate-three-alleged-islamic-state-supporters-decided-today/.

22. "ISIS Indonesia Head Quits as Police Close In," *The Jakarta Globe*, August 18, 2014, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/multimedia/tv/indonesia-highlights/isis-indonesia-head-quits-police-close/.

23. "Zahid: Six ex-ISA Detainees Involved with Militant Groups," *The Star*, March 31, 2015, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2015/03/31/Zahid-ISA-detainees-in-militant-activities/.

24. "Malaysia Arrests 17 over Terror Plot."

25. "Navy Officer Suspected of Militancy Freed," *The Star*, July 11, 2014, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/07/11/navy-officer-suspect-in-militant-activities-freed/; John Afrizal, "Police Officer Believed to Have Left Duty to Join IS," *The Jakarta Post*, March 24, 2015, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/03/24/police-officer-believed-have-left-duty-join-is.html.

26. Farik Zolkepli, "IGP: Militant Group Believed to Have Ties in Syria and Southern Philippines," *The Star*, May 3, 2014, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/05/03/CFrime-IGP-Militant-group/; Li Leen Chan, "Muamar Gadaffi Charged with Providing Militant Training in Perak," *The Star*, July 11, 2014, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/07/11/Plantation-worker-charged-with-providing-militant-training/.

27. Shi-Ian Lee, "Malaysian Militants for ISIS Recruited through Social Media, Says Source," *The Malaysian Insider*, September 22, 2014, available from www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/malaysian-militants-for-isis-recruited-through-social-media-says-source#sthash.OsxkWpD5.dpuf; "Woman Doc among 22 Malaysians with IS, Cops Confirm," *The Star*, October 5, 2015, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/10/05/Woman-doc-among-22-Malaysians-with-IS-cops-confirm/.

28. Farik Zolkepli, "14 Suspected Militants Held," *The Star*, October 16, 2014, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/10/16/14-suspected-militants-held/.

29. "Housewife Said to Be ISIS Recruiter among Latest Terror Suspects to Be Nabbed in Malaysia," *The Straits Times*, March 3, 2015, available from www.straitstimes.com/news/asia/south-east-asia/story/housewife-said-be-isis-recruiter-among-latest-terror-suspects-be-nab.

30. Richard A. Nielsen, "Does the Islamic State Believe in Sovereignty?" *The Washington Post*, February 6, 2015, available from www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/02/06/does-the-islamic-state-believe-in-sovereignty/.

31. Dyah Ayu Pitaloka and Tunggadewa Mattangkilang, "Islamists Are Split Over Support for ISIS," *The Jakarta Globe*, August 9, 2015, available from www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/islamists-split-support-isis/; Rendi A. Witular, "Sons, Top Aides Abandon Ba'asyir over ISIL, Form New Jihadist Group," *The Jakarta Post*, August 13, 2014, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/08/13/sons-top-aides-abandon-ba-asyir-over-isil-form-new-jihadist-group.html.

32. “Indonesia Prepares for Backlash from Returning Jihadis,” *Financial Times*, 2014, available from www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/o/e2dc2b12-22c3-11e4-9dc4-00144feabdco.html#axzz3AGuuDIqi.

33. Fatiyah Wardah, “Indonesia Battles Islamic State Recruitment,” *Voice of America*, November 25, 2014, available from www.voanews.com/content/indonesia-battles-islamic-state-recruitment/2534253.html; Bachelard.

34. Haeril Halim, “National Police Arrest Terrorism Suspects in Face of ISIL Threat,” *The Jakarta Post*, August 11, 2014, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/08/11/national-police-arrest-terrorism-suspects-face-isil-threat.html; Sri Lestari, “Does Islamic State Ideology Threaten Indonesia?” The British Broadcasting Corporation, August 11, 2014, available from www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-28700983.

35. “Densus 88 Arrests Six People over Islamic State Recruitment,” *The Jakarta Globe*, March 22, 2015, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/densus-88-arrests-six-suspected-islamic-state-recruiters/.

36. Nani Afrida, “Indonesian Gets No Incentives as Promised, Leaves IS, Syria,” *The Jakarta Post*, March 27, 2015, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/03/27/indonesian-gets-no-incentives-promised-leaves-is-syria.html#sthash.mvEtmukc.dpuf; Fedina S. Sundaryani, “IS Not Worth Joining: Returnee,” *The Jakarta Post*, April 1, 2015, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/04/01/is-not-worth-joining-returnee.html.

37. Graeme Woods, “What ISIS Really Wants,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 2015, available from www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2015/02/what-isis-really-wants/384980/.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Freedom House, *Freedom on the Net*, 2014, available from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/freedom-net-2014#.VQsBDlw-Bo7>.

40. For example, in August 2014, Indonesian officials blocked seven sites, to little avail. Ezra Sihite and Tunggadewa Mattangkilang, “Comms Minister Tifatul Blocks Access to ISIS-Related Websites,” *The Jakarta Globe*, August 6, 2014, available from

www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/comms-minister-tifatul-blocks-access-to-isis-related-websites/.

41. Shi-Ian Lee.

42. Stewart Grudgings and Trinna Leong, “Malaysian Militants Bought Bomb Material for Planned Attack—Official,” *Reuters*, August 21, 2014, available from www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/21/malaysia-islamicstate-idUSL2NoQQoBI20140821.

43. Shi-Ian Lee.

44. “11 Malaysian Members of Isis Dead.”

45. The other two Indonesian suicide bombers were 19-year-old Wildan Mukhallad and Riza Fardi. Fardi had attended the infamous al Mukmin (Ngruki) Islamic boarding school in Solo, Indonesia, founded by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and also attended by the Bali bombers. “*Hanzhalah Al-Indunisi, Amaliyah Istisyhadiyah Mujahidin Daulah Islamiyah Asal Indonesia Tewaskan Puluhan Tentara Syiah*” (“Hanzalah Al-Indunisi, a Member of Mujahidin Indonesia Daulah Islamiyah, Martyred Himself, Killing Dozens of Shiite (or Shia) Troops), *Panji Mas*, October 12, 2014, available from panjimas.com/news/2014/10/12/hanzhalah-al-indunisi-mujahidin-daulah-islamiyah-asal-indonesia-syahid/.

46. Mohd Faris Anwar, “20 from Kedah,” and Muhamad Wandy Muhamad Jedi, “26 from Malacca,” were featured in an ISIS video of mass beheadings released on February 20, 2015. “Men in IS beheading video identified as Malaysians,” *The Malay Mail*, March 4, 2015, available from www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/duo-in-is-beheading-video-identified-as-malaysians#sthash.cWRZY7VR.QdYjR66y.dpuf.

47. Maria Ressa, “ISIS Online Cheerleader Musa Cerantonio Spotted in PH,” *Rappler.com*, June 21, 2014, available from www.rappler.com/nation/61200-isis-online-cheerleader-musa-cerantonio-ph; Bea Cupin, “Australian ISIS Supporter Nabbed in Cebu,” *Rappler.com*, July 11, 2014, available from www.rappler.com/nation/63041-australian-isis-cerantonio-philippines; Lindsay Murdoch, “Australian Islamic Preacher Musa Cerantonio Arrested in the Philippines,” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 11, 2014, available from www.smh.com.au/national/australian-islamic-preacher-musa-cerantonio-arrested-in-the-philippines-20140711-zt4zy.html; and Woods.

48. Joseph A. Carter, Shiraz Maher, and Peter R. Neumann, “#Greenbirds: Measuring Importance and Influence in Syrian Foreign Fighter Networks,” London, UK: International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Violence, 2014, esp. pp. 25-28, available from icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ICSR-Report-Greenbirds-Measuring-Importance-and-Influence-in-Syrian-Foreign-Fighter-Networks.pdf.

49. “M'sian Militant Does It the Talk Show Way,” *The Star*, June 27, 2014, available from www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/06/27/Msian-militant-does-it-the-talk-show-way/.

50. Vita Busyra, “ISIS-Trained Indonesians Ring Alarm Bells,” *The Jakarta Globe*, June 20, 2014, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/isis-trained-indonesians-ring-alarm-bells/.

51. The video can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxsPR-_fYnk or jihadology.net/2014/07/22/al-?ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-join-the-ranks/?utm_content=buffer1f24d&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer.

52. Farouk Arnaz, “Indonesian IS Fighter Warns TNI Chief: Soldiers of God Are Waiting for You,” *The Jakarta Globe*, December 26, 2014, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/indonesian-fighter-warns-tni-chief-soldiers-god-waiting/.

53. *Ibid.*

54. Woods.

55. Video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQrOhaH9ekw>.

56. “Indonesia Pressured over Ahmadiyah Muslim Sect Killings,” BBC, February 8, 2011, available from www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-12389097.

57. Annual Report 2014, Washington, DC: US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), 2014, available from www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/USCIRF%202014%20Annual%20Report%20PDF.pdf.

58. Because of the erosion of religious freedoms, protection of minority rights, changing policies, and sectarian attacks, the USCIRF has designated Indonesian as a Tier II country since 2009. *Ibid.*

59. Bridget Welsh and Zachary Abuza, "Malaysia's ISIS Problem," *The Edge Review*, March 6-12, 2015.

60. *Support for "Islamic State" in Indonesian Prisons*, Jakarta, Indonesia: Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, January 19, 2015, available from www.understandingconflict.org/conflict/read/34/Support-for-Islamic-State-in-Indonesian-Prisons.

61. Agence France Presse, "Indonesia's Released Militants Feared to Join ISIS Forces," *Straitstimes*, October 8, 2014, available from www.straitstimes.com/news/asia/south-east-asia/story/indonesias-released-militants-feared-join-isis-forces-20141008; Kennial Caroline Laia, and Dyah Ayu Pitaloka, "Jailed Terrorist Convict Ba'asyir Pledges Oath With ISIS on the Rise," *The Jakarta Globe*, August 4, 2014, available from www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/jailed-terrorist-convict-baasyir-pledges-oath-isis-rise/#.U-AxrM4-Evc.twitter; Jet Damazo-Santos, "Support ISIS, Jailed Indonesian Terror Leader Tells Followers," *Rappler.com*, July 14, 2014, available from www.rappler.com/world/regions/asia-pacific/indonesia/63281-support-isis-jailed-indonesian-terror-leader.

62. *Support for "Islamic State" in Indonesian Prisons*.

63. Novianti Setuningsih, "Prisons Chief Warns of Budget Shortfall to Fight Radicalism," *The Jakarta Globe*, August 5, 2014, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/prisons-chief-warns-budget-shortfall-fight-radicalism/; Abuza, "The Rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah Detainees in Southeast Asia."

64. Video can be found at youtu.be/I7xvzvUx_As.

65. "Indonesian Hardliners Drum Up Support for ISIS," *The Straits Times*, July 17, 2014, available from www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/asia-report/indonesia/story/indonesian-hardliners-drum-support-isis-20140717#sthash.t4zmtL9U.dpuf.

66. Fedina S. Sundaryani and Haeril Halim, "IS Groups in RI Get Cash from Oz," *The Jakarta Post*, March 23, 2015, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/03/24/is-groups-ri-get-cash-oz.html.

67. Farik Zulkepli, "It takes only one pro-Islamic State person to create chaos, says anti-terror cop," *The Star*, October 15, 2014, available from thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/10/15/Police-fear-lone-wolf-attacks-here/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter.

68. Quotes in the paragraph are from Stewart Grudgings and Trinna Leong, "Malaysian Militants Bought Bomb Material for Planned Attack—Official," *Reuters*, August 21, 2014, available from www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/21/malaysia-islamicstate-idUSL2NoQQoBI20140821.

69. Lindsay Murdoch, "ASEAN Summit Bombing Averted: Malaysia Police," *The Age*, April 27, 2015, available from www.theage.com.au/world/asean-summit-bombing-averted-malaysia-police-20150427-1mtzlo.html?stb=tw.

70. "Tiga Fakta Ledakan Bom di ITC Depok" ("Three Facts about the Bomb at the ITC in Depok"), *Tempo*, February 24, 2015, available from www.tempo.co/read/news/2015/02/24/064644792/Tiga-Fakta-Ledakan-Bom-di-ITC-Depok.

71. Video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsZh2OnMKQ&t=12>.

72. Zachary Abuza, "Hezbollah's Model Spreads to Southeast Asia," *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2009.

73. *Reuters*, "US Imposes Financial Sanctions on Islamist Fighters, Including One Indonesian Group," *The Jakarta Globe*, September 25, 2014, available from www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/us-imposes-financial-sanctions-islamist-fighters-including-one-indonesian-group/.

74. The five were identified as Dr. Mahmud Ahmad, Mohd Najib Husen, Muhammad Joraimie Awang Raimee, Mohd Amin Baco, and Jeknal Adil. Nestor Corrales, "Int'l Terrorists Hiding in Mindanao—Report," *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*, July 3, 2014, available from globalnation.inquirer.net/107532/intl-terrorists-hiding-in-mindanao-re.

75. First described as Turks, they were later listed as Uighurs (Turkic). The four traveled to Cambodia, then Thailand, where they procured fake Turkish passports, then traveled to Malaysia and then Indonesia. The Four Uighurs arrested by Indonesia over their alleged links to ISIS will be put on trial in Jakarta and then returned to China.

They will be prosecuted. Once the indictment is completed, they will be returned to China. After that, it's up to the Chinese government whether they want to detain them, sentence them to death, or free them. It depends on the laws in force there.

Agus Salim Suhana and Neil Chatterjee, "Indonesia Nabs Suspected Foreign Militants on Fake Passports," *Bloomberg*, September 15, 2014, available from www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-09-15/indonesia-nabs-suspected-islamic-militants-using-fake-passports.html; Keith Zhai and Chris Brummitt, "China's Secret Plan to Track Militants and Bring Them Home," *Bloomberg*, March 17, 2015, available from www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-03-17/china-hunts-terrorism-suspects-in-stealth-campaign-around-globe; Aditya Surya and Zahara Tiba, "Uyghurs Arrested in Indonesia to be Tried, Sent to China," *Benar News*, March 19, 2015, available from www.benarnews.org/english_benar/news/indonesian/indonesia-uyghurs-trial-03192015173141.html.

76. Farouk Arnaz, "Despite Ban, Police Have Few Options in Dealing With ISIS Sympathizers," *The Jakarta Globe*, August 6, 2014, available from www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/despite-ban-police-options-dealing-isis-sympathizers/.

77. Haeril Halim and Hans Nicholas Jong, "Govt Unblocks Radical Websites," *The Jakarta Post*, April 1, 2015, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/04/01/govt-unblocks-radical-websites.html.

78. See the statement by the Malaysian Bar Association, available from www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/malaysian-bar-calls-anti-terror-bill-shameless-revival-of-isa; and www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/pota-will-fail-wont-deal-with-root-cause-of-terror-says-saifuddin?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitterfeed.

79. Under the article:

An inquiry officer may for the purposes of any inquiry under this act: (a) procure and receive all such evidence, in any form and whether the evidence be admissible or not under any written law for the time being in force relating to evidence or criminal procedure, which he may think necessary or desirable.

80. Ina Parlina and Margareth S. Aritonang, "Government, House to Amend Terror Law," *The Jakarta Post*, April 2, 2015, available from www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/04/02/government-house-amend-terror-law.html#sthash.PUexLeKe.dpuf.

81. Sara Schonhardt, "Indonesian Official Calls for More Authority to Combat Lure of ISIS," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 26, 2015, available from blogs.wsj.com/indonesiarealtime/2015/03/26/indonesian-official-calls-for-more-authority-to-combat-lure-of-isis/; "ISIS Prompts Ministry to Consult on Revision of Anti-Terror Law," *The Jakarta Globe*, March 27, 2015, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/anti-terrorism-law-to-be-revised-to-help-scrutinize-suspicious-travel-abroad/.

82. Ezra Sihite and Yustina Pat, "New Rules Proposed to Stem Outflow to Islamic State," *The Jakarta Globe*, March 20, 2015, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/new-rules-proposed-stem-outflow-islamic-state/; Ezra Sihite, "In Fight Against Islamic State, Indonesia to Intensify Surveillance," *The Jakarta Globe*, September 15, 2014, available from www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/fight-islamic-state-indonesia-intensify-surveillance/; Ezra Sihite, "Jokowi Still Mulling Revoking Citizenship of Indonesians Joining IS," *The Jakarta Globe*, March 20, 2015, available from thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/jokowi-not-time-yet-to-revoke-citizenship-of-indonesians-joining-is.

83. See www.malaysiakini.com/news/294372.

84. See www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/pota-will-fail-wont-deal-with-root-cause-of-terror-says-saifuddin?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitterfeed.

85. See www.news.com.au/world/breaking-news/malaysia-detains-17-terror-suspects/story-e6frfkui-1227293202488.

86. Sundaryani, "IS Not Worth Joining: Returnee."

87. Zachary Abuza, “The Rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah Detainees in Southeast Asia: A Preliminary Assessment,” in Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan, eds., *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*, New York: Routledge, December 2008.

The views expressed in this Of Interest article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. This article is cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Organizations interested in reprinting this or other SSI and USAWC Press articles should contact the Editor for Production via e-mail at SSI_Publishing@conus.army.mil. All organizations granted this right must include the following statement: “Reprinted with permission of the Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College.”